REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Status of the claims

Claims 1-23 are currently pending. As a result of the amendment filed with this response, claims 1, 3, 11, and 17 have been amended. No claims have been canceled. Claims 24-26 has been newly added in this response. No new matter has been added.

Examiner interview summary

Applicant had a telephone interview with the Examiner on May 15, 2007. Applicant discussed with the Examiner about the Examiner's interpretation of the cited references in rejecting claims 1 and 11. No agreement was reached.

Claim Rejections §103

Independent claims 1 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Blumenau et al. (hereinafter "Blum", U.S. Patent no. 6,421,711) in view of Gunlock et al. (hereinafter "Gunlock", U.S. Patent no. 6,952,734). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

Claim 1, as currently amended, recites:

> 1. A storage server in a storage area network connecting a plurality of host computers and a plurality of storage devices, said storage server comprising:
> a plurality of storage processors, wherein said plurality of storage processors receive a plurality of command packets and a plurality of data packets;
> a switching circuit connecting said plurality of storage processors; and
> a first microengine, wherein said first microengine is configured to execute a first process comprising:
> configuring a path between a first storage processor and a second storage processor of said plurality of storage processors, via said switching

circuit, in accordance with a command packet of said plurality of command packets; and

routing a data packet of said plurality of data packets over said path, prior to completely receiving said data packet, between said first storage processor and said second storage processor via said switching circuit.

(Emphasis added)

In contrast, Blum and Gunlock, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest the above emphasized limitation, namely, routing a data packet of said plurality of data packets over said path, prior to completely receiving said data packet, between said first storage processor and said second storage processor via said switching circuit.

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's acknowledgement that Blum does not teach or suggest the above emphasized limitation (*see* Office Action mailed on 2/1/2007, on page 3). The Examiner, however, contends that Gunlock discloses the above emphasized limitation and that it would be obvious to combine the teachings of Gunlock and Blum in order to provide extra capacity or redundancy to protect against switch, node, or line failures (*see* Office Action mailed on 2/1/2007, on page 4). To support the above allegation, the Examiner cites Gunlock's column 1, lines 30-40, 61-64, column 2, lines 35-41, 49-62, column 6, lines 56-62, and column 7, lines 15-24, and alleges that

> **Gunlock discloses data transmitted between machines is divided into chunks of size. Each chunk is typically packaged with a header and a trailer for transmission. In Fibre-Channel, packets are known as frames. There may be more than one possible path, or sequence of links, loops, etc. that may be traversed by a frame between two nodes. The driver uses network information to determine header information and routing for the one or more fiber channel network frames or packets according to commands. The driver must determine an appropriate destination and routing for each frame required to implement a command, and transmit those frames over a port appropriate for that routing.**

However, none of the above cited sections contains any discussion or indication of routing a data packet prior to completely receiving the data packet, such as recited in

claim 1. The Examiner's allegation, as quoted above, explains that Gunlock discloses routing data packets according to commands, but does not explain which part of Gunlock discloses routing a data packet prior to completely receiving the data packet and why. Applicants respectfully maintain that Gunlock does not teach or suggest routing a data packet of said plurality of data packets over said path, prior to completely receiving said data packet, between said first storage processor and said second storage processor via said switching circuit. Because the cited combination fails to disclose all of the limitations of claim 1, claim 1 and all claims which depend on it are patentable over Blum and Gunlock.

Independent claim 19 and newly added claim 24 each recites a limitation similar to that discussed above for claim 1. For similar reasons, therefore, claims 19, 24, and all claims depend on them are also patentable over Blum and Gunlock.

In addition, newly added claim 24 recites a limitation of "configuring a plurality of paths between the second storage processor and a storage device of the plurality of storage devices in accordance with said command packet". In rejecting claim 11 and claim 23, each essentially reciting the limitation quoted above, the Examiner alleges that Blum's column 8, lines 27-55 and column 13, lines 40-57 disclose the limitation. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Blum's column 8, lines 27-55 discusses connection paths between hosts and the port adapters, not connection paths between a storage processor and a storage device. The hosts, as disclosed in Blum, are not even part of the storage subsystem. Column 13, lines 40-57 also discusses the connection paths between the hosts (since host controllers are part of the hosts) and the port adapters. Thus, none of the cited sections teaches or suggests the limitation of configuring a plurality of paths between the second storage processor and a storage device of the plurality of storage devices in

accordance with said command packet, such as recited in claim 24. Gunlock also does not teach or suggest the limitation, neither does the Examiner contend so. Thus, at least for this additional reason, claim 24 is patentable over Blum and Gunlock.

For the foregoing reasons, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly requested.

If any additional fee is required, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: May 24, 2007

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